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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY USSR (Latvian SSR)

REPORT

SUBJECT Medical Institutions in Riga

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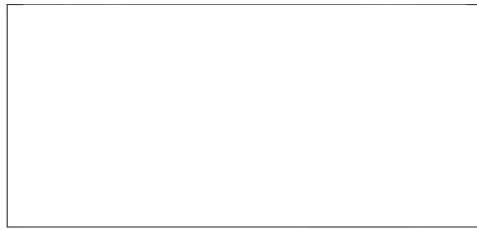
1. Riga had seven civilian and two military hospitals. There were 14 municipal dispensaries in Riga, most of which were attached to hospitals. Nevertheless, as a result of a severe shortage of hospital beds in Riga, patients were discharged before they were completely cured, and treatment was continued at the dispensaries. The shortage was attributed to the failure of the medical institutions to keep pace with the rate of growth of the population of Riga.
2. Penicillin was the only readily available antibiotic. The Soviet public had little confidence in domestic antibiotics and was prepared to pay many times the official price to obtain Western products. Vitamin compounds and drugs to counteract high blood pressure were also in short supply.
3. Between 1952 and 1954 sewage water leaked into a burst municipal water main in Riga, causing a dysentery epidemic (Flexner and Krusesonne strains). Victims of a scarlet fever epidemic which broke out in Riga in 1955-1956 had to be treated at home because of the shortage of hospital beds. Doors were marked with warning notices. During the period 1951 to 1955 there were minor typhoid epidemics in Riga.

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1. Municipal Hospital No. 1, which was subordinate to the municipal health department, was located at 5 Krasnoarmeyskaya Street, Riga. The 1,200-bed hospital had a medical staff of 100 persons, and also served as a clinic for the Riga Medical Institute. It had the following clinics and wards:
 - a. Four clinics for internal diseases
 - b. Two children's wards
 - c. Two venereal disease wards
 - d. X-ray department
 - e. Four surgical clinics
 - f. An ophthalmological clinic
 - g. Two urological wards

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- h. A 100-bed maternity ward
 - i. Two gynecological clinics
 - j. A dysentery ward
 - k. Two neuropathological wards
 - l. A neurosurgical clinic
 - m. A histopathological ward
 - n. A 40-bed artificial abortion ward, which was established following the official legalization of abortion. Women who wished to have an abortion had to apply to a hospital and appear before a medical-social committee which decided whether an abortion was justified on medical, social and humanitarian grounds. The procedure has become little more than a formality, however, and all requests are granted. The fee, fixed in accordance with the salary of the patient or her spouse, ranged from a minimum charge of 50 rubles to 30 percent of the earnings of the mother or the father.
2. Municipal Hospital No. 2, which occupied the former site of a medical institute on Taulu Street, treated severe cases from throughout the Latvian SSR, and also served as a research institution for the Riga Medical Institute. According to plan, this hospital was to be used exclusively for research, while the clinics of Hospital No. 1 were to be converted into departments. The 2,000-bed hospital included a neurological ward for children.

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3. Municipal Hospital No. 3, located ^{at} 112 Moskovskaya Street, had 400 beds, and included wards for internal diseases, surgery, gynecology, and urology.
4. Municipal Hospital No. 4, which occupied the site of the former Red Cross Hospital, had two internal diseases ward and one surgical ward. It had 200 beds.
5. Municipal Hospital No. 5, located at 13 Vaydenbaum Street, had 150 beds and internal diseases and surgical wards.
6. The municipal maternity hospital was located at 15 Mira Street, and had 150 beds.
7. A tuberculosis hospital, which had 300 beds and treated patients from throughout the republic, was on Gorkiy Street.
8. A 200-bed contagious diseases hospital was located in the Bikerniek Forest outside the town. It served as a research institution for the Riga Medical Institute.
9. Also used for research purposes by the Medical Institute was a cancer hospital on Taslu Street. It had 150 beds.
10. The Scientific Institute for Orthopedic and Surgical Rehabilitation was located at 12/22 Dumtas Street.
11. The military district hospital (voynni okruzhnoy gospi-tal) on Mira Street, Riga, had 1,000 beds and all standard departments, including a gynecological ward.
12. A 500-bed naval hospital (voynno-morskoy gospi-tal) was located on Moskovskaya Street.

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13. There were 14 municipal dispensaries in Riga, most of which were attached to hospitals. The hospital dispensary system had been introduced in order to raise the standard of treatment as well as to give physicians an opportunity to specialize.
14. As a result of a severe shortage of hospital beds in Riga, patients were discharged before they were completely cured, and treatment was continued at the dispensaries. The shortage was attributed to the failure of the medical institutions to keep pace with the rate of growth of the population of Riga, 300 percent since the annexation of Latvia. The military hospitals, however, had been built since World War II, and a civilian hospital was under construction in mid-1957.
15. The standard food budget was seven rubles a day per patient. Patients complained that their meals were poor and inadequate, probably because it was a common practice for hospital staffs to steal the supplies.
16. Penicillin was the only readily available antibiotic. The Soviet public had little confidence in domestic antibiotics and was prepared to pay many times the official price to obtain Western products. Vitamin compounds and drugs to counteract high blood pressure were also in short supply.
17. Between 1952 and 1954, sewage water leaked into a burst municipal water main in Riga, causing a dysentery epidemic (Flexner and Krusesonne strains). Victims of a scarlet fever epidemic which broke out in Riga in 1955-1956 had to be treated at home because

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of the shortage of hospital beds. Doors were marked with warning notices. During the period 1951 to 1955 there were minor typhoid epidemics in Riga.

18. One hundred physicians are graduated annually from the Riga Medical Institute.
19. The following persons were known:
- a. Professor Burtnicks (fnu), an internist who was a corresponding member of the Academy of Medical Sciences, was the director of both the Municipal Hospital No. 2 and the Riga Medical Institute.
 - b. Dr. Cherepovich (fnu) had been the director of the Municipal Hospital No. 1 since about 1950.
 - c. Dr. Goldberg (fnu) headed the urological department of Hospital No. 1 and also lectured at the Riga Medical Institute.
 - d. Dr. Kalnbers (fnu), a candidate member of the Medical Academy, was a lecturer at the Riga Medical Institute, and a consultant to the internal diseases clinics of the Hospital No. 1 Kalnbers

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- e. Professor Liepukalns, former assistant to Professor Borodenko (fmu), was the chief surgeon of the Latvian SSR and of Municipal Hospital No. 1.

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- f. Dr. Pius (fmu), an internist who formerly worked for the Institute for Orthopedic and Surgical Rehabilitation, had been the chief consultant to the internal diseases wards of Hospital No. 1 since about 1951.

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- g. Dr. Shub (fmu) was the director of the maternity clinic of Municipal Hospital No. 1 and the dean of the gynecological-obstetrical faculty of the Riga Medical Institute.

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- h. Dr. Strandins (fmu), an eminent specialist, was the head of the surgical faculty of the Medical Institute and the chief surgeon of Hospital No. 2.

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- i. Professor Vilde (fmu), a Latvian, headed the neuropathological clinic of Municipal Hospital No. 1.

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